

KY's 2018 POTOMAC HORSE FEVER (PHF) Cases - Updated: August 25, 2018

Data Source: KY Department Agriculture – Office State Veterinarian – contact: E.S. Rusty Ford

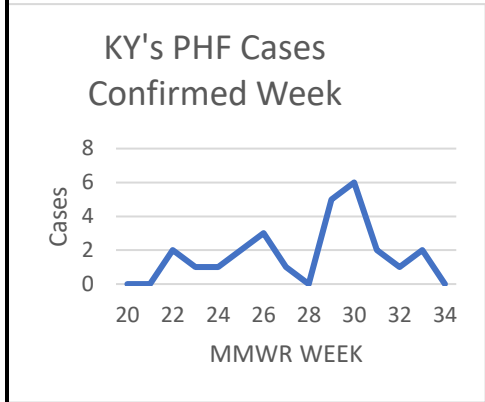
The first confirmed case of Potomac horse fever (PHF) diagnosed in KY during calendar year 2018 was reported on June 1, 2018. Through the week ending August 25, a total of 26 cases have been confirmed. Confirmation of each case was by PCR testing and compatible clinical symptoms observed. A summary of the cumulative cases is included in the table and graphics below.

Historically: KY's PHF cases are first detected later in the year (mid-July), and our thought is the early detection this year was most probably associated with abundant wet weather in April and record breaking warm temperatures in May.

Horsemen are encouraged to review the environment their horses are housed and consult their veterinarians on strategies they may use to mitigate disease risk. Minimizing opportunity for horses to ingest aquatic insects by turning off lights in and around barns and other areas at night has been suggested.

Potomac horse fever (PHF) is described to be an acute enterocolitis syndrome that presents as mild colic, fever, and diarrhea in horses of all ages. The resulting illness can also cause abortion in pregnant mares. The causative agent, *Neorickettsia risticii*, is a gram-negative bacterium. Infection of the large intestine results in an acute colitis, which is one of the principal clinical signs of PHF. While the disease is often associated with pastures bordering creeks or rivers; it is believed most horses contract PHF after inadvertent ingestion of aquatic insects that carry *N risticii* and not the water source.

26 KY PHF Cases Confirmed in 2018 Through Week: 34				
Counties	Cases			Current Status
Bourbon	11	Sex		Deceased 6 Survived 20
Bracken	1	Female	20	
Fayette	3	Male		
Franklin	1	Age (yrs)		
Harrison	1	Range	1 - 17	
Metcalfe	1	Median	5	
Scott	4	Breeds		
Shelby	1	Amer Saddlebred	1	
Woodford	3	Paint	1	
		Quarter Horse	1	
		Standardbred	2	
		Thoroughbred	18	
		TN Walking Horse	2	
		Trakehner	1	



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